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CORINNA'S BIG-HORN

By MARY WAKEMAN BOTSFORD

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The valley of Surface creek occupies as yet a vacant space in the southern corner of the map of Colorado. Ten years ago the Uncompaghere Utes left it to the staccato of a quick-step with a regiment of soldiers at their heels.

The decade has brought few changes to the little valley. Its sunny levels of sage and cactus lead up through cedar and scrub oak to the summit of the Grand Mesa, where even in the heat of August the quaking aspens shiver and shadows of the spruce make twilight out of noon.

The salmon trout finds its way through a thousand silver streams to the lakes strung like pearls along the mountain's top, where the eagle, stopping his wing an instant to catch his image in their cloudless calm, hears the clumsy fall of a black bear's cushioned foot, or the far cry of an elk borne on the resinous breeze.

Perhaps the echo of these caught Corinna's ear as she studied her maps and folders, for on the square where Surface creek should have been, she paused with pencil poised.

"I will go there," she said. And so it came that the valley knew her.

Corinna's mother was a fragile little lady with the coloring of Seves. In the forests which mother and daughter had traversed together by mule, horse and burro, on foot and in canoe, from ocean to ocean, there was nothing Corinna feared and nothing that Mrs. Clarke did not fear.

Yet in despite of her fears, the forests withheld no secrets from Corinna's mother. There was an irritating irony in the fate which ordained that to her, the most timid and incurious of her kind, should have been vouchsafed the sight of more big game than her adventurous daughter might ever hope to see, though she should live to twice her mother's years.

Corinna was tall and brown and shapely. She towered above her slender, petite mother like an oak over an anemone. There was only one other person with her mother in the drawing-room, John Chester Brown, a round-faced, portly gentleman who had occupied the adjoining house ever since his boyhood, and who had adored Corinna's mother years before Corinna was born, and for that matter, adored her now.

"We start on Monday," Corinna observed. "The big-horn won't wait."

"What is a big-horn? Where do you propose to go for it? And why won't it wait?" Mr. Brown asked, addressing Corinna's mother.

"Corinna!" Mrs. Clarke exclaimed in soft dismay. Her gentle blue eyes turned from her daughter's merry brown ones to meet, by a kind of helpless instinct, Mr. Brown's steady gaze, through his gold-rimmed glasses. Mr. Brown's eyes were gray. They said as plainly as eyes could: "You bit of thistle-down, where out my sight is that whirlwind of a daughter of yours going to carry you now?"

Corinna became serious. "Our sort of big-horn grows in inaccessible places, like the Fideiweiss. You stalk it over mountain crags, and it escapes you by jumping head foremost and landing on its horns. I have three cinnamon bears, four mountain lions, six elk and not a single big-horn. So mammy and I are to get one this autumn. But sh—sh—not a word to anyone, Mr. Brown! It's against the law to shoot one, and if you do, you are liable to \$1,500 fine!"

For years Mr. Brown had silently worshipped his fair neighbor, who flamed across his sky like a shooting star in the orbit of her eccentric daughter. Each time that he bade her farewell, he resigned her to some unimaginable fate, and upon her reappearance, welcomed her back as one miraculously restored to him from the dead. His wooing, such as it was, had all been done on the fly.

Just as he fancied he might be making some headway, whisk, she would be spirited off to the tropics or the frozen north, according to the season and as Corinna's fancy turned to sharks or polar bears.

He did not confide in Corinna or her mother when he accompanied them, and their suite, consisting of Wilson, the late Mr. Clarke's valet and his wife Susanne, Mrs. Clarke's maid, to the train to say good-bye. But the smoke from the limited still lingered in the vaulted glass dome of the Grand Central station when he entered his coupe and told the coachman to drive to his tailor's.

"I want a golf suit inside of three days, with stockings and a visored cap. Send your man down as soon as you can to fit me."

From the tailor's he drove to Corinna's gunsmith, where he ordered a combination rifle and shotgun similar to Mrs. Clarke's, with full equipment of cartridge belt, hunting knife and cartridges; the gunsmith, who carried a complete line of sporting goods, persuading him to add to these a trout rod, fly hook, landing net and game hamper. Before he left the shop he had accumulated other impedimenta in the shape of folding tents, blankets, rubber mattresses and pillow and two saddles and bridles. Now Mr. Brown had never fished, hunted or ridden, except a few times around the tannery circle of a riding academy when a boy, in his life.

"Spencer," he said to his man when dressing for dinner the evening that the Clarke left, "you must pack me

crank with the things that are coming home in a day or two. By Thursday we leave for a hunting trip in Colorado."

"It was poor Corinna's seventh day in the big-horn's country, and as yet she had got nothing but its tracks. Mrs. Clarke folded her afghan and took up her sketching materials.

"If you are going to stalk again, as you call it, I shall go out and do the Grand Mesa in charcoal," she said decidedly.

"Do, mammy dear. It will make a lovely sketch. And if you should be disturbed by your work by my big-horn, don't put him into the picture. He doesn't deserve it."

Seating herself where she commanded a good view of the Grand Mesa southern slope, Mrs. Clarke raised her umbrella and let her eyes wander absently over the wide landscape. Although the Grand Mesa occupied her vision, Mr. Brown occupied her thoughts.

Mrs. Clarke sighed just then; her comfortable house within the shadow of the Washington Arch and next door to Mr. Brown, seemed very far away.

"I must get to work," she said to herself, sighting again and settling her camp stool more firmly in the soft moss. She arranged her drawing-board and began to sketch in the outlines of her picture.

She had completed them and was just darkening the feathery edge of a fir with a bit of charcoal—when something dropped into her foreground with a crash of boulders.

With something like a furrow on her brow and a brighter pink in her delicate cheeks, she looked up. Her eyes met the level gaze of Corinna's great sheep. For full 60 seconds artist and sheep regarded each other. It was probably the first time in the history of the world that a Rocky mountain big-horn had ever been brought face to face with a woman under a green umbrella.

"God bless my soul, Anne, what have you got there?" a voice at Mrs. Clarke's elbow exclaimed.

Mrs. Clarke turned her bewildered eyes from the big-horn to Mr. Brown, who stood beside her, his jaunty cap



Mr. Brown in Mad Pursuit.

pushed back from his blonde and perspiring forehead, his legs in their heather-colored hose and corduroy knickerbockers, planted solidly like the sheep's, his cartridge belt with its glittering hunting knife and revolver, girdling his ample waist.

"Why," she said simply, "it's Corinna's big-horn!"

At this moment the big-horn took in the situation thoroughly, if tardily. With a snort, a magnificent lift of his great shoulders and a bound, he crashed through the thicket, leaped the stream and disappeared over the rim of the canyon which yawned at Mrs. Clarke's feet.

Before Mrs. Clarke realized what had happened, Mr. Brown had hurled himself after him in mad pursuit.

She saw a bulky mass of wildly waving arms and legs shoot through the air, strike the cliff with fearful impact, tremble an instant on its edge and fall, down, down, like Lucifer through space. There was a rattle of loose stones and sand and then a sickening silence.

For a brief moment of frozen horror, Mrs. Clarke could neither move nor think. Then she gathered her wits by a tremendous effort, crept to the edge of the canyon and looked over. Below, braced against a tree which clung precariously to a rocky shelf, half way down the cliff and holding with both hands to the tree's lower branches, sat Mr. Brown.

It was late when Mr. Brown and Mrs. Clarke returned to camp. Spencer had arrived and gone out in search of the missing member of their party.

Corinna met her mother coming slowly along the trail, suiting her pace to Mr. Brown's.

"Mother!" she cried, "where have you been? You have stayed so long I was worried to death about you."

"Your mother and I have been through a great deal, Corinna," Mr. Brown said solemnly.

"I should think so," Corinna said, eying the pair sharply. "One might think you had met my big-horn!"

"We did, Corinna," Mrs. Clarke said, with downcast eyes and one of her sudden, youthful blushes. "But I couldn't put him into my sketch where he stood; he would have spoiled the values!"

Non Est.

Hilker—There's one thing I forgot to ask you about, Hilker. What's his religion?

Spiker—It isn't.—Chicago Tribune.

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FOR JOURNAL OR FREE CATALOGUE, ADDRESS

T. W. ROACH, President, Salina, Kansas.

W. P. Feder transacted business at Hutchinson Wednesday, and incidentally took in the big fair.

The Silver Circle held a very interesting meeting at the home of Mrs. J. L. Carroll Thursday afternoon.

Waldo Emerson left Tuesday morning for a month's visit with relatives and friends at Lake Itasca, Wisconsin.

Dr. Meade, Frank Millard, Jr., F. V. Russell, and James Hulme have been out in Rush county the last few days on a hunting trip.

R. W. Emmerson has sold his farm in Liberty township to T. B. Unruh, the sale price being \$65 per acre. This is a good farm, most of it being bottom land, and is well worth the money. Mr. Emmerson has not as yet decided what he will do, but will probably move to the Bend to make his home.

A pleasant, good, high grade, truly flavored, amber colored cup of coffee can be had—and without the real coffee danger, or danger to your health—by simply using Dr. Shoop's new substitute, called Health Coffee. Pure, wholesome, toasted cereals, malts, nuts, etc., make Dr. Shoop's Health Coffee both healthful and satisfying. No 20 to 30 minutes of tedious boiling. "Made in a minute," says Dr. Shoop. If served as coffee, it's taste will even trick an expert. Test it and see. Sold by A. B. Hower.

Surprised 'Em Right.

Ed Panning and wife have been in Chicago on a visit for the past few weeks, and when they returned home Tuesday morning they found that another family had moved into the house they had been occupying and that their household goods had been packed up and moved away. As Ed had the rent paid in advance he was naturally very indignant, and threatened all sorts of dire calamities on the unfortunate head of his had-been landlord when he should see him. Finally Miss Ida Gaglieman, who had met them at the train, told Mr. and Mrs. Panning that she could probably find their things for them, and took them to the residence recently purchased from R. C. Russell by Father Gaglieman, where they found all their things arranged for house-keeping. Mr. Gaglieman, knowing that the young folks had often wished for this property, had purchased it for them while they were gone, and had moved their things into it. This is one of the kind of surprises that folks like to have sprung on them, and the young folks are duly grateful to Mr. Gaglieman for his thoughtfulness.

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